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EDITORIAL

SMALL FAVORS THANKFULLY RECEIVED, LARGE ONES IN PROPORTION.

By DANIEL DE LEON

WELL for the officers of the Colorado Militia! A well organized militia, said Jefferson, says the constitution, says everybody else of sense, is a desirable thing for THE PRESERVATION OF THE PEOPLE'S FREEDOM. Whereupon, quoting the first part of the sentence, and falsifying the second, the Republican and the Democratic press have tried to construe into treason to the nation the rising objection of intelligent workingmen to place their heads into what has become a noose—the militia—whereby to strangle the aspirations of their class and, therewith, the freedom of the people.

By degrees, and in even step with the sharpening of the class line in the country, the militia has become an effective part of the mailed glove wherewith the plundering class of capitalism has been smiting the plundered class of the workman. As a consequence of such development, the working class now finds itself wholly differentiated from the class whose hand is in the mailed glove. The capitalist plunderer holds the officerships in the militia; he orders; the workingman in the rank and file must obey, and, in obeying, may have to do what the German Emperor commended as the ideal conduct of the rank and file, to shoot down father and mother, brother and child, at command. In sight of the multiplying outrages perpetrated upon the workingmen with the aid of militias, workingmen in large numbers have begun to withdraw and others, who otherwise would have joined, stayed away from the militias.

In sight of such awakening popular intelligence, the capitalist press began to howl, the capitalist professors, politicians and pulpiteers began to thunder out anathema at such “treason to the country,”—which was natural enough,—but, and that was not so natural, many a workingman, still in the clouds of delusion and illusion, thought ill of his fellows who dropped the militia, and himself stuck to it. It is in connection with this latter manifestation that thanks are due to the officers of

the Colorado militia.

Called out in Colorado to trample upon the Telluride and Cripple Creek miners, the officers of the Colorado militia have rendered a valuable service, away from the ordinary, in bringing home to the workingmen their class distinctions. Thoroughly alive to their own buccaneer class safety, the officers of the Colorado militia placed no reliance on the workingman's ignorance on the subject. They felt that such ignorance could not last. They perceived that the moment it ends, alone ends their reign of terror. Accordingly, they considered a gun in a workingman's hands as too dangerous an implement, even if over him stood a passes-carrying capitalist hierarchy of officers. Accordingly these officers have just tried a militiaman for treason, the treason being that HE HELD A UNION CARD!

Capitalism plows the field for Socialism. Without the Capitalist plowman, the Socialist sowman could not succeed. In the furrow opened by the capitalist officers of the Colorado militia through this trial of a workingman militiaman for treason, on the ground that he held a Union card—a furrow that no Socialist himself could have opened—the seed of the class distinctions between plundered workers and plundering capitalists can now be planted, and will germinate.

The favor thus conferred upon the Labor Movement by the officers of the Colorado militia is no small one, and it is thankfully received.

Transcribed and edited by Robert Bills for the official Web site of the Socialist Labor Party of America.

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